

### Special points of interest:

- Pope Issues Encyclical Regarding the Environment
- Unity People's Convention 2015
- Welcome, Reverend Sharon Clements!
- UMW Invited to Submit Technological Assistance Grant Proposal

## Pope Issues Encyclical Regarding the Environment

On June 18, 2015, Pope Francis released the first ever encyclical dedicated to environmental issues, hoping to move hearts to become better stewards of the earth. In his encyclical, which is the highest level teaching document a pope can issue, the Pope encourages people to consider how their actions impact the world around them.

In light of this powerful statement by Pope Francis, one of the spiritual leaders of the world, Ron Habin, Unity EarthCare Team (UET) Chair, wrote the following:

The most significant faith-based contribution to earth's environmental sustainability has been issued in the papal encyclical of Pope Francis entitled "On Care for Our Common Home." Speaking to the world's 1.2 billion Catholics and billions more, His Holiness stressed that each of us is connected in an intimate way to all other living beings. In common vernacular, he emphasizes that we are each other's keepers. Further, he observes that over the last 200 years, humanity has done a great deal of damage to our planet home in its insatiable drive toward mass consumerism.

Now is the appropriate time for each and every member of our own extended Unity family to take the papal encyclical to heart. As we do our deep prayer and meditative work, environmental responsibility to each other and all living things is a fertile field of spiritual growth. When each of us hears what is ours to do, we are called to share our revelations with family, friends and our Unity spiritual communities. Aligned with this unique papal call to action, we recall Unity's fifth principle: "I do and give my best by living the Truth I know. I make a difference." Amen.

Next, Sara L Dade, a member of the Unity Church of Overland Park, Kansas, Green Team, opined as follows:

Pope Francis echoes an important Unity teaching—that all living creatures are connected and that "each must be cherished with love and respect" as we are all dependent on one another. This important Unity thought enables all of us to lead the way in building a sustainable world. Nature has intrinsic value independent of its usefulness to humans, and the Pope encourages us to remember that each living creature, just by merely existing, reflects God's infinite goodness and wisdom. The earth was here before us and has been given to us as a gift so that we might find the sustenance for life, however, it is also our responsibility to care for, protect and preserve it. We can do this by rising above consumerist social conditioning; Pope Francis reminds us that "no system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful."

Unity teaches us to find Spirit within ourselves and also within others, this applies not just toward other humans, but all living creatures because "the universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely." We have been equipped with a belief that has the ability to change how we interact with Mother Earth, now we just need to let the power of this gift shine through our relationship with other creatures and the world around us.



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## Mentoring Program

Join David Cordova for mentoring on the second Saturday of the month, **12 p.m. noon, Eastern**, to learn how to form a Green Team or expand your existing EarthCare Program. What a perfect opportunity to share inspiration and provide an inspiring cross-pollination of ideas and encouragement from across the continent. For more information, contact David Cordova, at [davecordova@msn.com](mailto:davecordova@msn.com), or by calling 210.825.8422



Sharon Clements

While the Pope's message has been enthusiastically received by people of many faiths, it was not as well received by some political leaders in the United States. However, it is my hope that our leaders will eventually see the environmental crisis not as a religious or political issue but as a moral issue. We all depend on the land to feed us, the water to quench our thirst, and the air to fill our lungs, and time is running out. Now is the time to take action. Mother Earth needs a team of strong environmental leaders to raise the bar for a sustainable future. We can be those leaders.

## Unity People's Convention 2015

UET Core Team Member David Cordova, representing Unity Church of San Antonio, Texas, represented the Earthcare Team at the 2015 Unity People's Convention in Albuquerque, N. Mex.

Martin Dowman, leader of the Compassionate Social Action team, played the opening scene to Awakening the Dreamer before the general assembly, which was received with great enthusiasm.

David conducted a survey of participants regarding the EarthCare program. Among the survey's major conclusions were that 70% of respondents knew there is a ministry team named EarthCare, 25% of churches have a green team. The most interesting conclusion was that 100% of respondents felt Unity Worldwide Ministries should participate in environmental activism.

Dave's overall impression of ministers' attitudes towards EarthCare is that it is viewed favorably but that UET should be more aggressive with regard to activism.

## Welcome, Reverend Sharon Clements!

Reverend Sharon Clements, who has been the senior minister at Unity Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, for the past 16 years, has joined the EarthCare Core team as its UWM board liaison. Unity Kitchener was the first congregation in the world to receive Earthcare certification. Sharon has been attuned to environmentally-friendly living since 1990, when she started composting. She introduced the ministry to an eco-friendly approach in 1999, switching from disposables to reusables wherever possible; adding a community garden; setting a culture of refillable water bottles; converting the front yard to a drought-resistant garden of indigenous plants, and appropriate renovations to the church building, etc.

Sharon is a mother of two adult children and grandmother of three. A transcendental meditator for over 40 years, a student of Religious Science since 1974, she was ordained as a Unity minister in 1999. Her master's thesis on 1st and 2nd century pre-Christian writings led her to an e-book exploring the metaphysics of the Gospel of Thomas and the canonical Gospels. Studying metaphysics—especially of everyday experiences, music, sports and modern literature—is a continuing passion.

In 2014 Sharon joined the board of Unity Worldwide Ministries after 13 years of service on the national board of Unity Canada. Prior to ministry, Sharon delved into several other careers.

## UMW Invited to Submit Technological Assistance Grant Proposal

Because the Unity EarthCare Team (UET) already has a Facebook page and mailing lists, and has done considerable work adapting the symposium Awakening the Dreamer to Unity audiences, it has been invited to submit a grant proposal to the Templeton Foundation to propose how it would apply multimedia and social media technology towards achieving its mission. The funds, if obtained, could assist UET with making the program technologically user-friendly and with marketing. The program is a year away but the seed has been planted.